



In re: Michael Miller et al.
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REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the examination of the present application that is evidenced by the Official Action of December 1, 2004. Applicants also appreciate the indication that Claims 9-21 and 27-30 are allowed and Claims 4-5 and 23-36 recite allowable subject matter. Nonetheless, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejections of Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 22 based on 35 USC 103(a). In particular, Applicants submit that U.S. Patent No. 6,732,227 to Baumann, which is assigned to the present assignee (Integrated Device Technology, Inc., Santa Clara, CA), is not prior art to the present application in view of 35 USC 102(e)/103(c). Moreover, the secondary reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,584,003 to Kim et al.) does not disclose or suggest any hybrid comparands that include a virtual sector field and a data field (see, e.g., FIG. 5A of the present application, which shows a search word containing a virtual sector field and a data field (i.e., IP_ADDRESS segment)), as argued by the Examiner. Applicants acknowledge that FIG. 4 of Kim et al. shows a CAM array divided into an M-bit field and an N-M bit field in order to save power. However, both of these fields represent respective data field segments of an N-bit data word. The M-bit data field is searched first (pre-search) and then, if at least one match of the M-bit data field is detected, followed by a search of the N-M bit data field (main-search), as illustrated by FIG. 6 of Kim et al. Thus, neither of these fields (M or N-M) represent any type of virtual segment field, which may be generated by a programmable address translation unit (see, e.g., FIG. 5A of the present application). Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 22 based on Baumann and Kim et al. is improper because Baumann is not prior art and Kim et al. does not disclose or suggest any hybrid comparand containing a virtual sector field.

Respectfully submitted,

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